

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

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DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 SS-15 NSC-05 EPA-04
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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1387
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E.O. 11652:N/A
TAGS: EAIR, UK, FR
SUBJ: CIVAIR - CONCORDE

1. LATE RADIO AND TV REPORTS MARCH 7 AND ALMOST ALL MAJOR MORNING PAPERS IN UK REPORTED DECISION OF NY/NJ PORT AUTHORITY TO DEFER AGAIN ITS DECISION ON CONCORDE LANDINGS AT NEW YORK. REACTIONS WERE MIXED AND THERE SEEMED CONSIDERABLE CONFUSION OVER HOW THIS LATEST DEFERMENT CAME ABOUT.
2. THE DAILY TELEGRAPH ARTICLE WAS HEADED "CONCORDE WINS TIME IN US". IT REPORTED THE POSTPONEMENT WAS WON BY THE FRENCH WHO ASKED THE PORT AUTHORITY FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT NEW ALTERNATIVE NOISE ABATEMENT PROCEDURES. IT ALSO NOTED THAT THERE IS NO ELATION IN BRITISH AVIATION CIRCLES. IT IS OBVIOUS CONCORDE IS UNACCEPTABLE TO THE PORT AUTHORITY AND IT IS NOT THOUGHT THAT THE POSTPONEMENT WILL ENHANCE ITS CHANCES.
3. THE FINANCIAL TIMES SUGGESTED THE PORT AUTHORITY HAD AGREED TO LOOK AT NEW EVIDENCE DUE TO ITS EMBARRASSMENT OVER THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE DECISION IT WILL HAVE TO TAKE ON CONCORDE. THAT ARTICLE AND OTHERS ALSO
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- NOTED THE UK AND FRENCH CONTENTION THAT REJECTION OF CONCORDE BY THE PORT AUTHORITY WOULD BE A BREACH OF THE US/UK AND US/FRENCH BILATERAL AVIATION AGREEMENTS.
4. SEVERAL PAPERS ALSO REPORTED PMARKS MADE BY PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF TRADE, STANLEY CLINTON DAVIS, DURING WWHAMMONS DEBATE ON CONCORDE MARCH 7.

THESE REMARKS WERE MADE BEFORE NEWS OF THE NEW POSTPONE-
MENT BECAME KNOWN. AS REPORTED, IN TERMS RARELY USED
BY A JUNIOR MINISTER, DAVIS POINTED OUT SANCTIONS OPEN
TO THE UK UNDER THE BERMUDA AGREEMENT IF CONCORDE IS
REJECTED BY NEW YORK. HE SAID, "WE RESERVE THE RIGHT
TO TAKE WHATEVER ACTION WE FEEL MORE APPROPRIATE". MPS
ON BOTH SIDES HAD ATTACKED THE REFUSAL OF US AUTHORITIES
TO HONOR TREATY COMMITMENTS. ACCORDING TO THE FINANCIAL
TIMES, MR. DAVIS LEFT NO DOUBT THAT THE BERMUDA AGREEMENT
IS CENTRAL TO UK GOVERNMENT THINKING AND SAID THE
DELAY ON CONCORDE AUTHORITY TO OPERATE TO NEW YORK IS A
SERIOUS VIOLATION NOT ONLY OF THE SPIRIT BUT ALSO OF
THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE BERMUDA AGREEMENT. DURING THE
COURSE OF HIS STATEMENT DAVIS ALSO SAID "I DENY THE
POINT MADE BY PRESIDENT CARTER IN HIS PHONE-IN PROGRAM
THAT IT IS POSSIBLE FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF THE
UNITED STATES TO SHUFFLE OFF THE QUESTION OF DETERMINING
TREATY RIGHTS TO GOVERNOR CAREY OR TO THE DICTATES OF A
LOCAL AUTHORITY".

5. IN A SEPARATE REPORT, THE FINANCIAL TIMES CORRESPOND-
ENT WROTE "... THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT REACTED WITH
CONSIDERABLE RELIEF TO THE DECISION TO POSTPONE THE
CONCORDE JUDGEMENT". IN CONNECTING CONCORDE TO THE
PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON, HE NOTED THIS MEANS
AT LEAST ONE OF THE ISSUES WHICH COULD HAVE SERIOUSLY
OVERSHADOWED CALLAGHAN'S TALKS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER
HAS BEEN SHELVED, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY. HE ALSO NOTED
THAT THERE COULD STILL BE A MAJOR CLASH OVER THE
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RENEGOTIATION OF THE BERMUDA AGREEMENT WHICH HE NOTED
HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR SEVERAL MONTHS WITH NO PROGRESS
AND WHICH HAS CAUSED CONSIDERABLE IRRITATION ON THE
AMERICAN SIDE.

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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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